

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion and in view of the present amendment, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 12, 14-16, 18, 19 and 39 are amended. Claims 1-39 are pending.

I. Interview Summary

The Applicants are appreciative of the indication in the previous interviews conducted prior to July 8, 2008, and in the interview conducted on August 13, 2008, that the indicated allowability of claim 12 was in error and that, as such, a new non-final Office Action would have to be issued. Therefore, it is appreciated that the Examiner indicated that the next Office Action would be a non-final Office Action.

In addition, the Applicants are appreciative that the Examiner indicated that clarifying that a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports would clarify the present invention with respect to the Carter reference.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, at page 2, numbered paragraph 3, claims 1-9, 14, 15, 19 and 21-38 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,039,205 to Carter et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because Carter does not discuss or suggest:

selectively connecting an audio circuit part co-operable with the selected audio apparatus type from among the plurality of the audio circuit parts and each one of the connection ports, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports,

as recited in amended independent claim 1.

Carter discusses that an audio transducer switch 101 is connected to multiple audio transducers including a near field microphone, a far field microphone, a handset, a headset, etc. The audio transducer switch 101 determines which one or ones of the audio transducers will be electrically connected to the input and output ports of sound cards 61.

The present invention of claim 1, for example, includes multiple connection ports 52, 54, 56, each one of which can be connected to multiple types of audio apparatuses. A switching part 60 allows each connection port 52, 54 or 56 to be connected to each of plural audio circuit

parts (i.e., input audio circuit part 42, output audio circuit part 44, or line input audio circuit part 46). Every connection port 52, 54, 56 has a same connection standard and thus is able to receive jacks of numerous types of audio apparatuses, such as a speaker 82, a microphone 84, etc. The switching part 60 allows for each one of the connection ports 52, 54, 56 to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts 42, 44, 46, depending on which type of audio apparatus is connected to the connection port at issue.

For example, if speaker 82 is connected to first connection port 52, the switching part 60 connected the first connection port 52 to the appropriate audio circuit part, which is appropriate based on the type of audio apparatus involved.

In contrast, in Carter, the connection ports are specific to the type of device that is connected to the connection port and the audio transducer switch 101 merely allows for different ports to be connected to the sound card 61.

In Carter, the electronic apparatuses are only able to be connected to a specific port – the port that is able to receive, for example, the normal telephone or the port that is able to receive the headset. However, in the present invention of claim 1, for example, any of the audio apparatuses will work, even though a user connects the audio apparatuses to any one of the connection ports 52, 54, 56. The switching part 60 allows all of the connection ports 52, 54, 56 to be connected to all of the audio circuit parts 42, 44, 46. Carter does not allow all of the connection ports to be connected to all of plural audio circuit parts.

In Carter, similar to that which was discussed at paragraph 0007 of the present specification, specific audio circuit parts 122, 124, 126 are connected respectively to specific connection ports 142, 144, 146. However, if a user connects a jack of, for example, the microphone 184 to the speaker connection port 142, which is only able to be connected to the output audio circuit part 122, the microphone 184 does not electrically cooperate with the output audio circuit part 122 connected to the speaker connection port 142 and thus is not able to work. Likewise, in Carter, if a headset is connected to, for example, the near field microphone connection port, the headset will not be able to work.

In contrast, as discussed at paragraph 0027 of the present specification, depending on which audio apparatus is connected to a connection port 52, 54, 56, the switching part 60 causes the output audio circuit part 44, for example, to electrically cooperate with a speaker 82 to output an audio signal, regardless of which connection port 52, 54, 56 the speaker 82 is connected to. Thus, as the switching part 60 allows each connection port 52, 54, 56 to be connected to each audio circuit part 42, 44, 46, an audio apparatus is able to work regardless of

which connection port 52, 54, 56 the audio apparatus is connected to. In Carter, however, an audio apparatus is not able to work if the audio apparatus is not connected to the correct connection port.

Accordingly, Carter does not suggest that the audio transducer switch 101 causes each one of the connection ports (the ports receiving the near field mic, far field mic, etc.) to be able to be connected to each one of multiple audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports.

Therefore, as Carter does not discuss or suggest “selectively connecting an audio circuit part co-operable with the selected audio apparatus type from among the plurality of the audio circuit parts and each one of the connection ports, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports,” as recited in amended independent claim 1, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Also, Carter does not discuss or suggest “at least two connection ports, an audio apparatus being connected to each of the connection ports; a plurality of audio circuit parts operating according to a type of the audio apparatus; a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports; and a control part controlling selective connection of each of the connection ports to one of the plurality of the audio circuits operable with the audio apparatus type,” as recited in amended independent claim 5, claim 5 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Additionally, Carter does not discuss or suggest a sound card including “an audio signal processor processing input and/or output audio signals from/to the audio apparatuses connected to any one of the connection ports independent of a type of each audio apparatus, the audio signal processor including a plurality of audio circuit parts; and a switching part causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the plurality of audio circuit parts, depending on a type of the audio apparatus that is connected to the connection ports,” as recited in amended independent claim 14. Carter does not discuss that the connection ports are integral to the sound card or that the audio signal processor is integral to the sound card. Therefore, claim 14 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Carter further does not discuss or suggest “controlling the multimedia component to connect the one connection port connected to the detected multimedia apparatus to a compatible information signal processor of the multimedia component according to a multimedia apparatus type selection in the activated multimedia apparatus type selection menu for the one connection port, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports, wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to the information signal processor of the multimedia component compatible with the multimedia apparatus,” as recited in amended independent claim 18. Therefore, claim 18 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Further, Carter does not discuss or suggest “selectively connecting each of the connection ports to one of a plurality of audio circuit parts co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports” as recited in amended independent claim 19. Therefore, claim 19 patentably distinguishes over the reference relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4, 6-9, 13, 15 and 21-38 depend either directly or indirectly from one of independent claims 1, 5, 12, 14 and 19 and include all the features of their respective independent claims, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. For example, claim 7 recites “a switching part controlled by the type selection program to selectively connect the plurality of the audio circuit parts and the at least two connection ports to each other.” Therefore, claims 2-4, 6-9, 13, 15 and 21-38 patentably distinguish over the reference relied upon for at least the reasons noted above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Office Action, at page 10, numbered paragraph 5, claims 10, 11 and 16-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Carter and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,504,553 to Fado et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As discussed above, Carter does not discuss or suggest all the features of amended independent claim 5. Carter also does not discuss or suggest “controlling the multimedia component to connect the at least one connection port to a compatible information signal

processor of the multimedia component according to the selection, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports, wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to the information signal processor of the multimedia component compatible with the multimedia apparatus type,” as recited in amended independent claim 16. Fado fails to make up for the deficiencies in Carter. Therefore, claims 5 and 16 patentably distinguish over the references relied upon.

Claims 10, 11, 17 and 18 depend either directly or indirectly from one of independent claims 5 and 16 and include all the features of their respective independent claims, plus additional features that are not discussed or suggested by the references relied upon. For example, claim 10 recites that “in the user selection window is a connection port display window to display whether the audio apparatus is connected to a corresponding connection port via each displayed connection port.” Therefore, claims 10, 11, 17 and 18 patentably distinguish over the references relied upon for at least the reasons noted above. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, at page 15, numbered paragraph 6, claims 20 and 39 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Carter and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2003/0041189 to Choi et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed because the combination of the teachings of Carter and Choi does not suggest that “the assigning function comprises selecting either one of receiving a signal from an external device or sending a signal to an external device, and wherein each of the connection ports is selectively connectable to one of the input and/or output ports co-operable with the external device connected to each of the connection ports, a switching unit causing each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports,” as recited in amended independent claim 39.

Carter does not suggest that a switching unit causes each one of the connection ports to be able to be connected to each one of the audio circuit parts, depending on the audio apparatus type connected to the connection ports.

Choi does not discuss or suggest displaying an indication of a detection signal detecting one of the ports that has the external device connected thereto. Choi only discusses displaying the operating state of the peripheral device, not which port the peripheral device is connected to.

Therefore, the combination of the teachings of Carter and Choi does not suggest all the features of amended independent claim 39. Thus, claim 39 patentably distinguishes over the

references relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

As discussed above, claim 19, from which claim 20 directly depends, is not discussed or suggested by Carter. Choi fails to make up for the deficiencies in Carter. Therefore, claim 20 patentably distinguishes over the references relied upon. Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103(a) rejection is respectfully requested.

III. Allowable Subject Matter

As to claims 12 and 13, which the Examiner indicated were allowed, in light of the multiple interviews conducted with the Examiner indicating that claim 12 would be rejected for the same reasons as that of claim 5, claim 12 was amended to correspond with the other claim amendments. Therefore, the Applicants are appreciative of the indication by the Examiner that the Examiner would issue a new non-final Office Action, interpreting claim 12 in a manner similar to that of at least claim 5.

Conclusion

In accordance with the foregoing, claims 1, 5, 12, 14-16, 18, 19 and 39 have been amended. Claims 1-39 are pending and under consideration.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

Reg. No. 55,248

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By: Margaret W. Harper /for
Kari P. Footland
Registration No. 55,187

1201 New York Avenue, N.W., 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501